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ABSTRACT

The report contains information based on the country presentation papers submitted by the 31 countries for the 1981 United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). It is intended as a background document for the Unesco meeting of experts from the LDCs on "needs and priorities in regard to education" to be held at Unesco in 1982. The document has many lacunae depending on the importance accorded to education in the country papers and on the information provided therein on education programs. Africa, having 21 of the 31 LDCs, is presented in terms of its present situation concerning: primary education; secondary education; higher education; and mass education, basic education, and adult education. Asia, including 7 of the LDCs, each with different physical, climatic, and socio-cultural characteristics, is discussed in terms of: primary education, secondary education and vocational training; higher education; and literacy programs. Two Arab States are described in terms of a brief review of their primary, secondary, and higher education. Haiti, the only country in the Western hemisphere included among the 31 LDCs, is also discussed. The document concludes with a look at education and rural development. Statistical tables are dispersed throughout the report. A French foreword and summary are included. (AH)

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EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

IN THE 31 LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

paper based on a text prepared

by Dr. Habib Zuberi

Division of Educational Policy and Planning

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EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE 31 LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

paper based on a text prepared
by Dr. Habib Zuberi

Dr. Zuberi has worked for Unesco in several African countries as an expert in biology and teacher training.

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FOREWORD

Unesco's Division of Educational Policy and Planning reproduces selected technical papers in the present "Reports, Studies" working series with the aim to disseminate information and ideas on current issues of interest to educational policy-makers, planners, administrators and school architects. Papers are distributed on request to Unesco programme specialists and to interested technical personnel in governmental and private institutions.

Most of the papers in the series were originally prepared for one of the Division's study projects, meetings or conferences, and have been selected because of their topical interest. The opinions expressed in the papers are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of Unesco. The reader should also bear in mind that many of the papers are working documents, unedited and are not intended for public distribution. Thus, linguistic deficiencies are evident in some papers, due to the fact that the author has written in a language other than his or her mother tongue.

The series includes two general types of papers: (i) those focusing on the education system or some educational problems in a particular country (numbered C.1, C.2, etc.) and (ii) those treating a subject with a broader or indefinite geographical context (numbered S.1, S.2, etc.). The current list of titles, which contains an index by country and by general subject, may be obtained from the address at the bottom of this page. Comments on the series and on particular papers are most welcome.

AVANT PROPOS

La Division des politiques et de la planification de l'éducation de l'Unesco reproduit certains documents techniques dans la série "Rapports et Etudes" afin de diffuser des informations et des idées relatives aux problèmes courants auxquels doivent faire face les décideurs, les planificateurs et les administrateurs de l'éducation ainsi que les architectes scolaires. Ces documents sont distribués sur demande aux spécialistes de l'Unesco et aux cadres techniques intéressés d'institutions gouvernementales et privées.

La plupart des documents de cette série ont été à l'origine préparés pour des programmes d'études de la division, des réunions ou des conférences et ont été sélectionnés en fonction de l'actualité du sujet traité. Les idées exprimées sont celles des auteurs et ne reflètent pas nécessairement les vues et politiques de l'Unesco. Les lecteurs doivent également tenir compte du fait qu'il s'agit souvent de documents de travail inédits qui ne sont pas destinés au public. De plus, certains auteurs ont rédigé leur document dans une langue qui n'est pas la leur, ce qui explique quelques faiblesses linguistiques.

Cette série se divise en deux catégories de documents : (1) ceux qui ont trait au système éducatif, ou à un aspect particulier de l'éducation dans un pays donné (numérotés C.1, C.2, etc.) et (2) ceux qui traitent d'un sujet dans un contexte géographique plus large ou non défini (numérotés S.1, S.2, etc.). La liste actualisée des titres, qui contient un index par pays et par sujets, peut être obtenue à l'adresse ci-dessous. Tout commentaire éventuel sur cette série et sur chacun des documents serait apprécié.

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Summary

The vast majority of the population of the least developed countries (LDCs) lives in rural areas, generally in conditions of material poverty with only limited access to social services, including education. Socio-economic development for these countries means, first of all, rural development. Following the UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Paris, 1981), the world community undertook to support the LDCs in their efforts to achieve self-sustained development which would improve the living standard of their people, particularly the rural and urban poor.

High rates of illiteracy and low levels of educational attainment are common characteristics of the LDCs and constitute a serious handicap for rural development. Recognizing this and also the right to education of all citizens, the LDCs have committed themselves to eradicating illiteracy and to providing universal primary education. The growth in educational expenditure, which has generally exceeded the growth of Gross National Product and which often accounts for 20-30 % of all public expenditure, testifies to this commitment. One result has been a two-fold increase in primary school enrollments in the LDCs between 1960 and 1980 and even more rapid expansion of enrolments at second and third levels of education. Further increases in enrollments (see Table D.2)will require a major effort and allocation of resources.

However, the horizontal expansion of education has not yet succeeded in correcting internal imbalances in the availability of educational services, which still are heavily concentrated in urban areas; in some countries, there are also noticeable differences between regions. Most LDCs have made some headway toward equalizing the enrollment of boys and girls, though illiteracy and school drop-out rates remain generally much higher for girls than for boys. Various reforms have been undertaken to improve the quality of education and to bring it more in line with the local environment, employment opportunities, and national development goals. Most countries have taken steps to diversify secondary education, usually with a view to providing possibilities for agricultural or technical instruction and vocational training. In a number of countries, higher education institutions and courses are also being oriented toward national development needs.

Increasing attention is being given to adult education and programmes intended to reach out-of-school youth, often within the context of rural development projects. Non-formal education and training are being tried in some LDCs as an alternative to regular schooling and merit careful study as perhaps a more suitable means to reach certain population groups, such as inhabitants of remote areas.

Résumé

La grande majorité de la population des pays les moins avancés (PMA) vit en zones rurales, généralement dans des conditions de pauvreté matérielle et bénéficie de façon très limitée de services sociaux, tel que l'enseignement. Pour ces pays, le développement socio-économique signifie tout d'abord le développement rural. A la suite de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur les Pays les moins avancés (Paris, 1981), la communauté internationale entreprit de soutenir les PMA dans leur effort visant à assurer leur propre développement afin d'améliorer le niveau de vie de leur population, en particulier celui des populations pauvres rurales et urbaines.

Des taux élevés d'analphabétisme et des faibles niveaux de scolarité sont les caractéristiques communes des PMA et constituent un sérieux handicap au développement rural. En reconnaissant cet état de fait ainsi que le droit à l'éducation pour tout citoyen, les PMA se sont engagés à supprimer l'analphabétisme et à assurer l'enseignement primaire à tous. L'accroissement des dépenses en éducation qui, en général, dépasse celui du Produit national brut et qui correspond souvent à 20-30 % des dépenses publiques, en est la preuve. Ceci a eu pour effet de doubler l'augmentation des effectifs de l'enseignement primaire dans les PMA entre 1960 et 1980 et d'entraîner une expansion encore plus rapide des effectifs des niveaux secondaire et supérieure. Toute nouvelle augmentation des effectifs (voir tableau D.2) nécessitera un énorme effort tant au niveau de la gestion que du financement.

Cependant, en ce qui concerne l'expansion horizontale de l'éducation, les déséquilibres internes relatifs à la disponibilité des services éducatifs, n'ont pas encore pu être corrigés, ceux-ci se concentrant largement dans les zone urbaines ; dans certains pays, il y a également des différences sensibles entre régions. La plupart des PMA ont fait quelques progrès pour égaliser les effectifs de garçons et de filles, bien que les taux d'analphabétisme et d'abandons scolaires restent généralement plus élevés chez les filles que chez les garçons. Diverses réformes ont été entreprises pour améliorer la qualité de l'éducation et pour mieux l'adapter à l'environnement local, aux possibilités d'emploi et aux objectifs nationaux du développement. La plupart des pays ont pris des mesures pour diversifier l'éducation secondaire, généralement dans le but d'offrir des possibilités d'enseignement en matière d'agriculture et de formation technique et professionnelle. Dans un certain nombre de pays, les instituts et les cours d'enseignement supérieur sont de plus en plus orientés vers les besoins relatifs au développement national.

Une plus grande attention est apportée à l'éducation des adultes et aux programmes destinés aux jeunes non scolarisés, souvent dans le cadre de projets de développement rural. Dans certains PMA, la formation et l'éducation non formelle sont utilisées comme alternative à la scolarité habituelle et méritent une étude attentive en tant que moyen mieux adapté pour atteindre certains groupes de populations, tels que les habitants de régions éloignées des villes.

I. Introduction

Historical background

1. The United Nations Population Division has assessed that in 1980, out of the total world population of 4,373 million inhabitants, 2,574 million (i.e. 58.9 %) were living in rural areas. In the developing countries, the rural population comprised 70.1 % of the total population, and this percentage was even higher for the least developed countries (LDCs). The lack of educational provision in the rural areas, both in quantity and appropriate quality, thus deprives the vast majority of people in the least developed countries of even minimal educational opportunities and helps perpetuate social disadvantages. Since the impoverishment and backwardness of a rural population are directly linked and contribute heavily to the backwardness of an entire country, every strategy to help develop the least developed countries must focus on rural development and accord it a high priority. The U.N. and some of its specialized agencies laid stress in the 1960s on providing assistance to the developing countries to promote the growth of their Gross National Product(GNP) through industrialisation and development of infrastructure. Although much progress was achieved by many developing countries, the assessment of the first UN Development Decade showed that it had scarcely benefitted the most underpriviledged, particularly the rural population in the least developed countries.(1) A new strategy and a new emphasis was clearly necessary to achieve meaningful progress and development.

2. At the UN Conference on Trade and Development - UNCTAD (Manila, June 1979),the international community resolved to launch a comprehensive and expanded programme in favour of all the least developed countries. The U.N. Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Paris, 1-14 September 1981), in resolution 122(v), later endorsed by the UN General Assembly resolutions 34/203 and 34/210, called for expanded financial, technical and emergency assistance in two phases on favourable terms and conditions. The objective of the adopted programme of action is to alleviate poverty, expand employment opportunities in the rural areas, raise agricultural productivity, and to provide basic needs, such as education, health care and sanitation. Phase One, an "Immediate Action Programme" covering the period 1979-81, provided for greatly expanded assistance aimed at alleviating the critical situation of the least developed countries by (a) providing an immediate boost for their economies and support for certain projects to meet the most pressing social needs and (b) paving the way for much longer term development effort. Phase Two, "A substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s", aims to transform the economies of the LDCs towards self-sustained development, enabling them to provide at least minimal internationally accepted standards of nutrition, health, housing, education, transport and communications, as well as job opportunities to all their citizens and particularly

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* See list of sources at end of text.

to the rural and the urban poor. For Phase Two (substantial new programme), the Conference called for the preparation of greatly expanded national development programmes by each LDC reflecting its needs and priorities.

3. The present document is prepared on the basis of information contained in the country presentation papers submitted by the 31 countries for the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Paris 1st - 14th September 1981. It is intended as a background document for the Unesco meeting of experts from the least developed countries on "Needs and priorities in regard to education" to be held at Unesco Headquarters in September 1982. The document has many lacunae depending on the importance accorded to education in the country papers and on the information provided therein on education programmes.

Unesco's actions emphasizing the role of education for rural development

4. Unesco's Medium Term Plan, 1977-1982, document 19 C/4, reflects the Organization's preoccupation with the educational aspects of rural development right from its inception. In the 1950s Unesco promoted 'fundamental education', a multi-purpose type of adult education in the rural communities of the developing regions. From 1965 onwards, a worldwide functional literacy programme was launched by Unesco mainly for the benefit of the rural areas; this was supported soon afterwards by a programme to help train primary school teachers for rural areas. Unesco's activities in the field of equal access to education, especially for girls and women, have also largely been concentrated on rural areas. In the mid 1970s Unesco emphasized the democratization and renewal of education, still paying particular attention to the needs of rural areas. Under the 'Education for rural development' programme, Unesco helped the Member States to train agricultural specialists, technicians and instructors and to adapt the curricula and structures of primary education to the needs of rural communities. Certain Unesco activities in the field of the mass media, such as promoting the rural press and rural radio, as well as its 'Man and the Biosphere Programme, its programme concerning the preservation of cultures and oral traditions, and some activities in the applied social sciences, have had important rural development aspects and are a further testimony of the Organization's concern and preoccupation to improve the lot of the under-priviledged rural populations.

II. Present situation

A. Africa

5. Of the 31 least developed countries, 21 are in Africa - a very large and varied region. They include large countries like Sudan, with a surface area of about 2,505,813 square kilometers, and small countries like Cape Verde, with a surface area of only 4,033 square kilometers; dry and semi-arid countries like Upper Volta and Mali and humid and wet countries like Benin and Guinea; flat countries like Chad and mountainous countries like Ethiopia and Rwanda;

countries with a fairly large population like Tanzania, with a population of 17,982,000 and Ethiopia with a population of 30,420,000, and those with a very small population like Comores (population 320,000) and Cape Verde (population 300,000); countries with high primary enrolment ratios like Lesotho (103) and Tanzania (96) and those with low enrolment ratios like Upper Volta (17) and Niger (23); and countries with high rates of literacy, such as Tanzania (73 %), and those with very low literacy rates, such as Niger and Somalia (both with 5 %). These differences among the least developed countries in Africa suggest a variety of problems requiring different solutions and strategies.

6. However, these countries have at least one factor in common : the great majority of their population lives in rural areas, where facilities for education and training, health care and sanitation, as well as other social services, are much poorer than in urban areas. Thus each government is under some popular pressure to redress this unjust internal socio-economic disparity and to bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth. One of the starting points has been an attempt to reform education, both in content and in methodology, to bring it in line with the development needs of the country in general and of its rural inhabitants in particular.

Primary education

7. From the early 1960s when most of Africa's LDCs gained their independence, they have tried to rectify and improve the modest education systems they inherited by expanding and reorienting them to meet their particular needs and requirements. They all recognize education to be an inalienable right of their citizens and are committed to providing free universal primary education and eradicating illiteracy. (2) Despite the many difficulties they face, most countries endeavour to provide education to all sectors of the population, including those in rural areas. Their efforts have resulted in a considerable growth in school enrolments, but in spite of this growth, many African countries have not been able to achieve universal primary education by 1980, the target year set at the Addis Ababa Conference in 1961. In fact, by 1980, eleven African countries (including seven in the Sahel) had an enrolment capacity in primary schools corresponding to less than 50 % of their population of primary school age.

8. In Niger only 20 % of children of primary school age were enrolled in 1979 in the country's 1,360 public and 28 private schools. In Upper Volta in 1960, 51,000 students were enrolled in primary education out of a corresponding school age population of 964,000. This enrollment rate (5.3 %) went up to 14.55 % by 1980. At this pace of expansion, by the year 2000 the primary school enrollment in Upper Volta would reach 29 %. However, enrolments in the urban areas are relatively high - 53.39 % in the capital - but very low in the rural areas - 4.7 % in Dori. Enrollment rates not only vary between rural and urban areas. In some countries there are wide

disparities between different internal regions. Thus, in Sudan, the general rate of enrollment is six times higher in the North than in the South.

9. In general the enrollment of girls is markedly lower than that of boys.(3) For example, in Benin the gross enrollment rate (i.e. including "overage" pupils) for boys is 80 %, but only 37 % for girls; in Chad it is 51 % for boys, but only 19 % for girls. Botswana and Lesotho are exceptions, having a higher enrollment rate for girls : for the year 1978, the gross enrollment rate for girls in Botswana was 98 % as against 80 % for boys and in Lesotho it was 123 % for girls as against 83 % for boys. This situation is no doubt due to the exodus of male workers from both these countries to neighbouring South Africa for 'job opportunities'.

10. Gross enrollment rates, however, do not necessarily give a true picture of participation in primary education because many students either repeat one or more years or drop out and do not complete the entire primary cycle. Thus a country with low drop-out but high repetition rates can have an enrollment exceeding the primary school age population, even though many children of this age group never enter school. (3) (See Table A.1). Lesotho, with the highest primary enrollment rate (101 %) amongst the least developed African countries, has about 7.8 % dropouts and repeaters. In Burundi, with a gross enrollment rate of 21 %, the percentage of repeaters for 1977-78 was 27.2. In Mali the gross enrollment rate in the same year was 28 % and the percentage of repeaters was 26.7. In Botswana and Tanzania there was less "wastage" of human resources as there were only 2 % and 0.4 % repeaters respectively (1977-78) for an enrollment rate of 89 % and 96 % respectively. The data on dropouts is very incomplete and scanty and hence is not tabulated. There are many causes of dropout and in rural areas they include one or more of the following : financial difficulties of the parents who are unable to meet the school fees and/or need the child's help in the fields or in the trade; irrelevance of education to job opportunities in the rural environment; and lack of interest and motivation on the part of students because of the poor quality of teachers and indifferent teaching methods, etc. Lack of job opportunities has, perhaps, a more derogatory effect on rural development because most children who complete studies move away to cities in search of higher income jobs, thereby depriving the rural community of educated manpower.

11. Public expenditure on education has risen, in general, at a higher annual rate than the Gross National Product. In Africa in 1960, an average 3.6 % of Gross National Product was spent on education; by 1972 this percentage had risen to 4.7 %. (2). Since the growth of GNP has not kept pace with the growth of education expenditure and requirements of the African countries, they have been obliged to allocate large shares of their national budgets to meet education costs. Upper Volta, for example, allocated 10.9 % of its national budget for education in 1980; 75.9 % of this allocation was spent on personnel and 24.1 % on materials. In 1978 Botswana and Mali spent respectively 23.8 % and 30.5 % of total government expenditure on

Africa

Table A.1 - Gross enrollment rates 1978 and percentage of repeaters, 1977-78, - First level of Education in African LDCs

Countries	Total Gross Enrolment	Boys	Girls	Percentage of repeaters both sexes
Benin	58	80	37	17.7
Botswana	89	80	98	2.0
Burundi	21	26	17	27.2
Cape Verde	-	-	-	-
Central African Republic	77	100	54	31.8
Comores (73)	48	66	30	-
Ethiopia	28	38	18	-
Gambia	37	50	24	15.6
Guinea	35	45	24	10
Guinea-Bissau	104	143	65	18.1
Lesotho	103	83	123	7.8
Malawi	55	66	44	16
Mali	28	36	20	26.7
Niger	23	29	17	12.3
Rwanda	71	74	67	16.9
Somalia	50	65	36	-
Sudan	50	58	42	2.7
Tanzania	96	105	87	0.4
Tchad	35	51	19	37.6
Uganda	51	60	43	11.3
Upper Volta	17	21	12	18.5

Source : Unesco Statistical Yearbook - 1981 and "Trends and projections of enrollment by level of education and by age", Unesco 1981.

education. It is pertinent to mention here that the estimated educational cost per child in real terms has risen considerably; although the rise in costs at the primary education level is not as pronounced as in the secondary and the higher education, it is nevertheless substantial. This rise in unit cost is due to cost increases in all the components of primary education, as indeed of secondary and higher education, including the physical facilities (construction of new schools and additional class rooms, school furniture and other equipment - scientific equipment, books and notebooks, blackboards, etc.), the salaries of teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as the training of those teachers. School construction alone will keep unit costs high in many countries. Thus, in Gambia, where the number of the primary schools has doubled since independence and where the primary school enrolment is expected to increase by 25,000 between the years 1980-85, the second five-year plan foresees the construction of more than 1,000 class rooms. Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Uganda and Rwanda propose to construct more primary schools and provide rural communities with permanent school structures.

12. The quality and relevance of the education is of prime concern to all the countries in the African region. They inherited from the colonial powers education systems ill adapted to their needs and which imparted an education which was not based on local realities. It is no surprise, therefore, that the product of these systems were young men and women who felt somewhat alien in their own environment. The reform of the education system, both in content and structure, was therefore accorded high priority in all African LDCs. Such reforms varied from remodelling parts of the existing system to a complete rethinking of the whole. Generally, the curricula have had to be redesigned with a view to making education less élitist and to link it with the real life, at the same time strengthening cultural identity. The following specific examples illustrate the variety of new approaches tried out and adopted by the least developed countries in Africa.

13. Since 1973 Benin has carried out a global reform that affects all types and levels of teaching to achieve a new school which encourages participation of all in production. The curricula were adjusted so as to establish school co-operatives and to enable the students to take part in productive activities within the community. In Guinea the "Revolutionary Education Centres" provide courses in adult education and programmes of civic, moral and ideological training. The "Brigades" in Botswana represent an effort to meet particular needs of rural development with emphasis on employment generation and self reliance. In Burundi development of basic education in the rural environment is considered a necessity in the country's educational development programme, and efforts are underway to make primary education polyvalent so as to relate it to various aspects of life, specially agriculture. In Malawi, there is an ongoing programme in rural technology which provides skills of immediate relevance in rural areas, e.g. carpentry, building and tinsmithing etc. Rwanda has accorded a high priority in the major educational reforms of March 1977 to democratizing education through quantitative and qualitative improvement and to its ruralisation and professionalisation. Ruralisation implies giving intensive practical training to 90 % of the primary school graduates to help integrate them into their rural environment. Instruction is now given in the national language to strengthen national integration.

Secondary education

14. The second level of education plays an important role in determining the professional orientation of an individual and therefore has important social and economic implications. The target for secondary education for all the African countries, adopted by the Addis Ababa Conference, was that by 1980-81, 30 % of the pupils completing their primary education should be admitted to secondary schools. (2) Amongst the least developed African countries, the highest enrollment rate for the year 1978 was 20 % for Botswana, and lowest in Burundi, Rwanda and Upper Volta, being 2 % in all the three countries (see Table A.2). But in spite of these relatively low percentages, there has been an increase in real numbers. Thus in Upper Volta, since 1960, there has been an increase in the secondary school enrollment of 16.4 %, and the goals and policies for the 1980s envisage development of basic education for 7 to 16 year-olds and development of secondary and technical education . In Malawi, the aims of the 1965-69 Development Plan included "a significant expansion of secondary and post-secondary education" : as a result both secondary and university enrollments doubled and technical and vocational training facilities were set up. In Lesotho, secondary education has grown 5.5 % per year in the last ten years.

15. Further expansion of secondary education is being planned by many countries. For example, Rwanda intends to provide secondary education to 19 % of its primary school leavers, and by 1990 all the primary school-age population should be enrolled. Mali and Sudan plan to expand the vocational and technical training courses as part of their second level education.

Higher education

16. There has been a considerable increase in the number of centres of higher education and universities throughout Africa: the number of universities went up from only 4 in 1950 to 63 by 1975. This increase reflects a response to the need for highly trained national personnel. The Conference of Ministers responsible for the Application of Science and Technology to Development (Dakar, 1976) recommended that "African countries accord the highest priority to the creation or strengthening of national universities"(2). Among the African LDCs, the highest enrollment per 100,000 inhabitants in higher education is in Guinea (435) and the lowest is in Tanzania (15) (See Table A.3). In Rwanda 8 % of secondary education graduates are admitted to the National University and the National Pedagogical Institute, and both these institutions are being oriented towards forming cadres in priority fields. In Burundi, in the year 1978-79 there were 1,702 students enrolled in higher education. In Guinea, the total number of university students in 1979 was 23,000, out of which 75 % were attending the agro-zootechnique schools. Some countries like Mali have established centres of higher education (Centre pédagogique supérieur and Institut polytechnique rural) to meet their specific needs in priority fields in a practical way.

Table A.2 - Secondary education - Gross enrollment rates and Percentage of repeaters (1978) in African LDCs

Countries	Total	Boys	Girls	Percentage of repeaters
Benin	11	16	6	12
Botswana	20	19	21	-
Burundi	2	3	2	8
Cape Verde	-	-	-	-
Central African Republic	10	16	4	19
Comores (73)	7	11	3	-
Ethiopia	8	11	6	-
Gambia	11	16	7	2
Guinea	15	22	8	-
Guinea-Bissau	10	16	4	27
Lesotho	14	12	16	-
Malawi	4	6	2	-
Mali	9	13	5	22
Niger	4	5	2	12
Rwanda	2	3	1	8
Somalia	5	8	3	-
Sudan	16	20	11	-
Tanzania	4	5	2	-
Tchad	3	6	1	11
Uganda	5	7	3	2
Upper Volta	2	3	1	13

Source : Unesco Statistical Yearbook - 1981

Table A.3 - Number of students per 100,000 inhabitants in African LDCs, 1970 and 1978

Countries	1970			1978		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Benin	12	22	2	99	165	35
Botswana	-	-	-	111	151	77
Burundi	13	25	1	40	68	13
Cape Verde	-	-	-	-	-	-
Central African Republic	5	10	-	57	107	8
Comoros	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ethiopia	18	34	3	41	74	10
Gambia	-	-	-	-	-	-
Guinea	50	93	8	435	708	168
Guinea-Bissau	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lesotho	38	50	26	131	108	154
Malawi	22	36	8	24	42	7
Mali	14	26	3	76	136	18
Niger	-	-	-	19	32	6
Rwanda	16	30	3	26	48	3
Somalia	35	61	9	84	151	18
Sudan	102	175	27	149	224	71
Tanzania	15	26	5	15	28	3
Tchad	-	-	-	18	35	2
Uganda	43	72	15	55	83	28
Upper Volta	3	6	1	20	31	8

17. Most African LDCs stress that the institutions of higher learning should play a more important role in rural development programmes, and many institutions are orienting their studies and research towards local problems. The National University of Lesotho has been helping in adult education and literacy programmes. In Sudan, the eleven higher technical institutes, which previously formed various specialized departments of Khartoum Polytechnique, as well as the different faculties of Khartoum University, have provided senior technicians and mechanical engineers in agriculture and other fields relevant to rural development in Sudan.

Mass education, basic education and adult education

18. Recognizing free access to education as a right of every citizen, all the least developed countries are committed to making it available to every child and adult. Different countries have adopted different methods for achieving this aim. Thus the "Namutamba pilot project" in Uganda involves the integration of basic education into rural development and seeks to strike a balance between the academic component, the vocational component, and the cultural component of education. The project includes pre-vocational and pre-agricultural training and provides general and agricultural (or technical) education of practical vocational use in a basic cycle lasting nine years. Functional literacy, numeracy and scientific and functional knowledge and skills are the components of the "Ujamaa" project in Tanzania. Tanzania launched this mass education project for self-reliance in 1967; the Ministry of National Education and the Ministries of Health and Agriculture are involved along with the Prime Minister's Office. "Ujamaa" has many aspects : for example, integrated rural development projects (Lushoto) and the literacy campaign -- which by 1973 had organized literacy courses for over three million people. In Upper Volta, where the illiteracy rate is very high (about 92.5 %), adult education is receiving priority, but the project for the eradication of illiteracy has made relatively slow progress, with only 8,000 persons benefitting from it. In Mali, where 85 % of the population depend on agriculture for a livelihood, village communes are being established as basic units of the rural economy. Special emphasis will be put on literacy action and vocational training in conformity with national needs. In Sudan, the literacy rate is 20 %, but it is likely to go up as a result of the concerted efforts being made at the Integrated Rural Education Centres (IREC's) established since 1979. These centres provide primary and adult education to all sectors of population, as well as vocational and technical training, in fields with particular relevance to rural development. Malawi, through its National Rural Development Programmes, has plans to expand non-formal education to reach people not in school and gives particular emphasis to adult literacy projects. These programmes aim to involve the rural people more directly in the national economy and develop rural skills through the provision of training in technologies needed for self-reliance. In Guinea, a mass literacy campaign, launched through Unesco's help in 1968, had helped advance functional literacy in eight national languages by 1979.

19. Many African countries have adopted or emphasized non-formal education as a means of practical preparation for life, mainly for their rural population. In Burundi, the government wishes to develop non-formal education as a rapid and less costly alternative to formal primary schooling and plans to multiply the non-formal or "yagamukama" schools, which by 1981 covered 260,000 children and 18,000 adults. Guinea-Bissau intends to reinforce non-formal educational programmes which teach about the problems of daily life e.g. basic hygiene and sanitation, organization of collective work, functional literacy, and basic elements concerning the measurement and weighing of the various commodities. Uganda places adult literacy amongst its priorities for 1981-82 and hopes to achieve 80 % literacy by 1990 through formal, liberal and fundamental education and through technical and in-service training. The country plans to secure effective participation of the community in development programmes and extend the 'Namutamba' (basic education integrated into rural development) project to all regions of the country. In Upper Volta, non-formal vocational training for young agriculturists will be given to 15-18 year old people at special centres established under the supervision of the Ministry of Rural Development. In 800 centres, 29,000 students will receive this training. In Ethiopia, the educational programme for Phase I (1980-85) has mass education as a priority and aims at making 10 million people literate. It is planned to construct 700 reading centres and 244 community skill-training centres. Rwanda proposes to strengthen village development through village centres which will co-ordinate all the vocational and technical training activities for young people and for adults. It is planned to construct 140 additional village centres and install a central support service for these centres. It is hoped that through collective efforts ('Umuganda'), better living and working conditions and self-reliance will be achieved. Finally, Tanzania's 'Ujamaa', or education for self-reliance, to which reference was made earlier, is a good example of the adoption of innovative non-formal education to satisfy local needs and priorities. In 1967, priorities shifted in favour of basic education for the entire population, and its content was refocussed on the rural environment. This new policy has greatly helped promote the literacy campaign and mass education, as well as rural development.

20. The use of mass media, such as TV, radio and the local press, have helped in extending the reach of basic education in Mali, Ethiopia and Lesotho. Oral traditions and the use of indigenous languages are important components of basic and mass education. For the development of the African languages, many countries have established linguistic institutes, for example in Guinea, (Académie des langues) in Mali (Institut National pour l'Alphabetisation fonctionnelle et la linguistique appliquée), in Tanzania (Institute of Swahili Research) and in Somalia (Academy of Somali studies). (2)

B. Asia

21. The region includes 7 of the least developed countries, each with different physical, climatic and socio-cultural characteristics. These include large landlocked countries like Afghanistan, with a surface area of about 647,497 square kilometers, and small countries surrounded by water like Maldives, with a surface area of only 298 square kilometers; countries with large and relatively easily accessible populations like Bangladesh, with about 90,000,000 inhabitants, and those with small dispersed populations like Bhutan, with only 1,269,000 inhabitants; flat coun ries with hot and humid climates, such as Bangladesh and Maldives, as well as countries with high mountains and dry climates, such as Afghanistan and Nepal; countries with high gross enrollment rates like the Democratic Republic of Lao (93%)and Bangladesh (67%)and those with low gross enrollment rates like Bhutan (10%)and Afghanistan (21%);and countries with very high literacy rates like Maldives (82 %) and those with very low literacy rates like Afghanistan (12 %).

Primary education

22. All the countries in the Asian region recognize the right of every citizen to have free access to education, but despite considerable progress in primary level enrollments (see Table B.1), poverty and social deprivation have inhibited the achievement of expected gains by the most disadvantaged. In Afghanistan where education consisted mainly of religious instruction given in the mosques and where the modern education system received little attention until recently, the number of students enrolled in the primary schools in 1977 was 889,133. The following year, after the revolution, this number went up to 942,787 - an increase of 6 %. Bangladesh accords a high priority to achieving universal primary education and primary level enrollment is expected to go up from 7 million in 1980 to 13 million in 1985, representing 90 % of the population of primary school age. In Maldives, the 1977 enrollment rate for the age group 5-19 was 26 %, i.e. 10 % in formal schools and 16 % in 'Maktab' schools. By 1980, the enrollment rate reached 80 %, of which 24 % attended formal schools and 56 % attended 'Maktab' schools. In spite of a high level of literacy, the level of educational attainment of the population is relatively low : about 77 % have not passed any standard and only 20 % have passed the primary level. In Nepal the majority of the primary schools lack the minimum facilities, but there are plans to upgrade the physical facilities of 6179 primary schools, i.e. about 50 % of the total number. Following a reorientation of academic education towards practical knowledge in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, 450,000 pupils were enrolled in primary schools in 1979, representing about 30 % of school age children.

23. The figures for the percentage of dropouts in primary education are not available for all the countries in the Asian region. For the year 1978, the drop out rate was 30 % for Afghanistan, 20.6 % for Bangladesh, and 3.5 % for Bhutan. (3) In the Asian countries, as in the African countries, curricular reforms are underway to respond to respective national needs. In Bangladesh, for example,

Table B.1 - Gross Enrollment rates at the First level of Education in Asian LDCs, 1960-1978

Countries	1960 Total	1965 Total	1970 Total	1975 Total	1978		
					Total	Boys	Girls
Afghanistan	8.6	16.2	23.0	25.1	21	35	7
Bangladesh	41.6	43.6	54.0	63.4	67	87	46
Bhutan	-	-	-	-	10	14	6
Lao People's Democratic Republic	25.1	39.9	53.8	55.9	93	101	85
Maldives	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nepal	8.6	15.2	18.9	23.2	77	114	38
Samoa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source : Unesco Statistical Yearbook - 1981 and Unesco document "Education in Asia and Oceania : a challenge for the 1980s."

Table B.2 - Gross Enrollment rates at Secondary level in Asian LDCs, 1960-1978

	1960	1965	1970	1975	1978		
					Total	Boys	Girls
Afghanistan	0.5	1.2	2.4	3.7	6	10	2
Bangladesh	7.3	12.4	17.6	22.9	25	37	11
Bhutan	-	-	-	-	1	2	1
Lao People's Dem. Republic	0.9	2.0	4.0	3.8	16	20	12
Maldives	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nepal	6.0	10.0	11.6	15.2	16	26	6
Samoa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table based on Unesco document "Education in Asia and Oceania : a challenge for the 1980s" + Unesco Statistical Yearbook-1981.

primary curricula are being designed to make education relevant to rural life and occupations. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, schools function as cooperative enterprises, similar in concept to schools in Benin.

Secondary education and vocational training

24. In all the developing countries of the region taken together (including the least developed), during the period 1965-75, the rate of growth of enrollment at the secondary level was higher than at the primary level. Until recently, access to secondary education has been limited to those students who graduate from the primary schools. Partly to provide a "side entry" or "second chance" to those without primary education diplomas and partly to meet the growing needs for middle-level cadres, many countries in Asia have felt it necessary to diversify the structure and re-orientate the curricula of secondary education, which often now covers vocational and technical training, as well as teacher training. For example, Bangladesh plans a diversification of secondary education to include vocational courses, and new curricula are being prepared towards this end. The country also plans to establish one community (secondary) school at each Union and Thana headquarters. Total enrolment is expected to increase to 2.5 million in 1985 from 2 million in 1980. In Nepal, one educational objective is the upgrading and expansion of scientific and vocational education in secondary schools with emphasis on practical scientific and vocational training as an integral part of the curriculum. Table B.2 reflects a progressive increase in the gross enrollment rates at the secondary education level. Information concerning the percentage of repeaters remains rather scarce; in Afghanistan and Bhutan it is reported to be 16 % and in the Lao People's Democratic Republic it is estimated to be 6 %.

25. Data on the vocational/technical education and teacher training are too imcomplete to indicate their growth patterns in relation to the overall growth of second-level enrollments, but it is known that vocational education relating to agricultural and rural occupations has grown more slowly than other forms of vocational education. (5). In the countries where the duration of primary education has been extended, there is a tendency to upgrade both teacher training and technical/vocational education to post-secondary level. Afghanistan plans to increase the enrollment in vocational and specialized schools by 70-90 %. In Maldives, a vocational training centre is operating in Male, and there are plans for a technical educational project and for the establishment of rural vocational training centres. A shortage of qualified secondary teachers seems to be a universal phenomenon, and in certain fields, such as science, mathematics and technical/vocational education, the shortage is more acute. This results in high pupil/teacher ratios, sometimes adversely affecting the quality of teaching. In rural areas the qualifications of teachers are generally poor, so improved teacher training is therefore a priority task for rural development.

Higher education

26. Among the Asian LDCs enrollments in higher education represent only 1-3 % of the corresponding age-group. (Table B.3 shows the number of students per 100,000 population). Since the unit cost of higher education is very much higher than the unit cost at the first and second levels of education, this factor inhibits expansion programmes. (See Table B.4). In Maldives, there were only 56 university graduates in the whole country in the year 1977, but its plans for the 1980s foresee an increase in the number of university graduates. However, Bangladesh seeks to introduce selective admission and to emphasize scientific education at the higher education level. It also plans to rectify the imbalance between the sexes by admitting more women to the universities and colleges. The intake of the engineering colleges is to be increased, and the number of technicians is expected to go up from 21,560 in 1980, to 38,250 by 1985. In Afghanistan, under its substantial programme for the 1980s, enrollment in higher education is to increase by 60-70 %.

Literacy programmes

27. All the Asian LDCs attach very high priority to the eradication of illiteracy. Table B.5 indicates the gravity of this problem, particularly among women. In Bangladesh, for example, where only 22 % of the adult population is literate, the elimination of illiteracy is a major objective. Under its comprehensive rural development programme, non-formal educational activities for adult illiterates and school dropouts are given priority. This programme is geared to increase the technological base of the rural economy and to increase production, income and employment, and is directed towards activities in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, health, education, irrigation and housing.

Table B.5 - Percentage of illiterates in the population 15 years of age and over in 4 Asian LDCs

Countries	Year	Men	Women
Afghanistan	1965	88.0 %	99.0 %
Bangladesh	1961	66.6 %	91.3 %
Lao People's Democratic Republic	1962	70.0 %	73.0 %
Nepal	1971	77.6 %	97.4 %

Source : Unesco document "Education in Asia and Oceania : a challenge for the 1980s".

Table B.3 - Number of higher education students per 100,000 inhabitants in Asian LDCs

Countries	1970			1978		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Afghanistan	46	76	14	101	161	38
Bangladesh	172	300	35	185	309	53
Bhutan	-	-	-	11	17	5
Lao People's Dem. Republic	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maldives	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nepal	185	297	69	234	370	93
Samoa	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source : Unesco Statistical Yearbook - 1981

Table B.4 - Recurrent public expenditure per pupil at second and their levels as multiples of the expenditure by pupil at first level in 4 Asian LDCs

Countries	Year	Index Number		
		First level	Second level	Third level
Afghanistan	1974	100	738	3,325
Bangladesh	1972	100	239	3,005
	1973	100	174	2,671
Lao People's Dem. Republic	1970	100	597	6,436
	1972	100	534	15,462
Nepal	1975	100	134	819

Source : Unesco Statistical Yearbook - 1981

C. Arab States

Primary education

28. Only two Arab countries are included amongst the least developed countries, namely the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.* The enrollment for all the Arab countries taken together between 1970-75 rose by 1.5 % per annum for the first level of education (6). The gross enrollment rate for primary education in 1978 was 29 % in Yemen Arab Republic and 72 % for P.D.R. Yemen (See Table C.1), though the latter reports a 50 % dropout rate. The expansion of primary education has been much less in the rural zones compared to urban areas, and the enrollment of girls is much lower than that of boys, the girls living in the rural areas being at the greatest disadvantage. (6) Concerted efforts are therefore needed to attain universal primary education, to which all the Arab countries are committed.

Secondary education

29. Secondary education is being diversified in both countries to provide middle level cadres. In People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, only 11 % of the secondary school age group are enrolled. The total enrollment in its vocational training institutes during 1977/78 was 3,032.

Higher education

30. The development plan of P.D.R. Yemen seeks to improve the facilities at Aden University, to establish a medical school, and to create a college of higher education. In Yemen Arab Republic, objectives for the 1980s include establishment of technical institutes and scientific colleges.

Table C.1 - Gross enrollments in first level education by sex in the Arab LDCs

Country	1970 %			1975 %			1978 %		
	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF
Yemen Arab Republic	17	2	10	41	5	23	50	7	29
People's Democratic Republic of Yemen	93	23	59	108	51	80	92	51	72

* Sudan is considered by Unesco to be in the Arab States region.

Table C.2 - Gross enrollments in second level education by sex in the Arab LDCs

	1970 %			1975 %			1978 %		
	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF
Yemen Arab Republic	1	0	(1)	5	1	3	8	1	4
People's Democratic Republic of Yemen	15	4	9	35	10	23	42	15	28

Source for Tables C.1 and C.2 : "Recent quantitative trends and projections concerning enrollment in education in the Arab countries", Unesco 1977, and Unesco Statistical Yearbook - 1981.

Table C.3 - Projections of enrolment ratios by age group and sex for 1985 in the Arab LDCs

Countries	6-11 age group			12-17 age group			18-23 age group		
	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF
Yemen Arab Republic	68	30	49	34	9	22	11	4	8
Yemen Democratic Republic	95	72	83	71	35	53	30	13	21

Table C.4 - Percentage distribution of second-level enrollments by type of education - Arab countries

Countries	Year	General	Teacher Training	Technical
Yemen Arab Republic	1970	90.6	7.2	2.2
	1975	92.0	5.6	2.4
Yemen Democratic Republic	1970	94.5	2.2	3.3
	1974	96.7	1.6	1.7

Source for Tables C.3 and C.4 : Recent quantitative trends and projections concerning enrollment in education in the Arab countries - Conference of Ministers of Education - Arab States - Unesco, 1977.

Table C.5 - Number of students enrolled in the higher education for every 100,000 inhabitants in Arab countries

Country	1970			1978		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Yemen Arab Republic	1	2	-	74	137	16
Yemen People's Dem. Republic	6	9	3	145	205	85

31 The literacy rate is very low in both the Arab countries. In Yemen Arab Republic it was 13 % (1976) and in Yemen People's Democratic Republic 20 % (1978). This percentage is lower in the rural areas than in the urban areas and is much lower for women than for men. Adult education and mass education therefore figures prominently as a strategy in the educational reform programmes. In Democratic Republic of Yemen, there are 446 adult literacy centres with 44,000 participants. The objectives and strategies foresee amelioration of the out-of-school system of education as well as emphasis on functional literacy.

D. Latin America

32. The only country in the Western hemisphere included among the 31 least developed countries is Haiti. All the information given here has been taken from the Haiti country presentation paper for the United Nations Conference on the 31 Least Developed Countries.

Primary education

33. There has been an overall improvement in primary school enrollment during the last 10 years : the enrollment of the 6-12 year-old age group has gone up from 50 % in 1970-71 to 60 % in 1978-79, but because of repetition total enrollment (530,341) represented 85.3 % of the 6-12 age group. Out of every 1000 pupils enrolled in the primary schools, only 474 finish primary education six years later. On and average, pupils take 10.74 years to complete the six years course of studies. Primary education is faced with many problems : poor administration of the education system, financial constraints, unstable teaching corps, under-qualified staff, lack of promotion opportunities and poor salaries for teachers, poor working conditions and education not adapted to local conditions. The student/teacher ratio in the urban areas is 1 : 41, but in the rural areas it is 1 : 88. In the five-year plan for the period 1981-86, it is foreseen to reduce the present enrollment disparity between the different regions, and priority is accorded to the construction of the primary schools, with a view to achieving universal primary education by the year 2000.

Secondary education

34. Secondary education covers the 13-19 years age-group, but the 80,860 enrollment represented only 13,2 % of this population in 1978-79. In secondary education, wastage is higher than in primary education : out of every 10 students who enroll, only two pass their 'baccalauréat'. The student/teacher ratio is about 21:1. Haiti's educational objectives include the reinforcement and restructuring of secondary education with a view to adapting it to national realities and to developing technical and professional education. The current five-year plan foresees the construction of seven 'lycées', financial assistance for technical and professional education, and the establishment of a teacher training college (Ecole Normale Supérieure) to produce teachers for secondary education.

Higher education

35. The total number of the students enrolled in higher education in the year 1978-79 was 3,081. The Government aims to reorient university education towards research and towards the training of technical cadres.

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III. Education and Rural Development

36. All 31 least developed countries recognize education as a birthright of every citizen, but the rate of progress in the democratization of education and the target date for achieving universal primary education and the eradication of illiteracy vary from country to country. A comprehensive projection of the gross enrollment rates in primary education for all the least developed countries in the year 2,000 is given in Table D.1.

Table D.1 - Comprehensive projection of the gross enrollment rates in primary education for the least developed countries in the year 2000

Enrollment rates	Countries	Percentage of the total primary school age population of 30 LDCs*
Less than 50 %	Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burundi, Upper Volta	14.4 %
50-59 %	Chad, Guinea, Mali, Niger	7.8 %
60-69 %	Gambia, Yemen Arab Republic	2.2 %
70-79 %	Ethiopia, Uganda	17.7 %
80-89 %	Bangladesh, Central African Rep., Haiti, Malawi, Somalia, Sudan	41.2 %
90-99 %	Benin, Rwanda, Yemen Dem. Rep.	4.2 %
100 % and above	Botswana, Cape Verde, Lao People's Rep., Lesotho, Nepal and Tanzania	12.5 %
		100.0 %

Source : Trends and projections of enrollment by level of education and by age - Unesco, 1981.

* Guinea-Bissau is not included in this list.

37. The majority of the population of these countries lives in rural areas (e.g. 88 % of Bangladesh's total population of 90 million, 86 % of Ethiopia's total population of 31 million) where illiteracy is higher, enrollment percentages lower, training facilities for vocational skills meagre, and health care and sanitation poorer than in the urban areas. To redress this imbalance and to ensure an equitable distribution of national benefits to all citizens, almost all the LDCs have devised development strategies which link rural development plans to educational expansion, particularly at the primary level.

38. In Bangladesh, a comprehensive rural development programme aims at improving the quality of life, increasing employment opportunities, and developing the technological base of the rural economy through activities in agriculture, fisheries, education, health and family planning. It accords high priority to universal primary education and to the eradication of illiteracy. In Benin, compulsory education by 1990 and development of indigenous technology are high priorities, along with rural and agricultural development. Botswana has earmarked major investments for rural development between 1979-85 and will increase educational opportunities for all sectors in line with the particular needs of rural development. Guinea aims at satisfying the basic needs of its entire population in areas of education and hygiene, etc., and plans an expenditure of 35 % of total investment on rural development with emphasis on agriculture. Guinea-Bissau, in its first development plan (1983-1986), puts emphasis on training programmes in basic hygiene, sanitation, and vocational training in handicrafts and on functional literacy to benefit mainly the rural areas. Malawi intends to provide more educational facilities in rural areas and will make a major investment in rural and community development in the 1980s. In Lesotho, a Rural Development Ministry, set up at the start of the 2nd five-year plan, coordinates development activities and involves people's representatives. There are plans to make education more relevant ot the country's socio-economic development needs and to develop curricula, and instructional materials.

39. In Mali, rural education and vocational training are given priority, and the Government plans to establish village communes (ton villageois) as basic units of the rural economy. Central African Republic will democratize and adapt its basic education to local environments in the 1980s and will invest 58,183 million CFA francs (1981-85) plus 50,584 million CFA francs (1986-90) on rural development, as well as 15,914 million CFA francs (1981-85) plus 5,910 million CFA francs (1986-90) on education and training. Rural development in Ethiopia will be achieved through eradication of illiteracy, provision of polytechnic education for all children from grade 1 to 8, provision of basic health services to 85 % of the rural population (about 30 million), and through emphasis on agricultural cooperatives and on handicrafts and cottage industries. The Lao People's Democratic Republic is reorienting its academic education towards practical knowledge, using the school as a cooperative unit. In Rwanda, the ruralization and professionalisation of education has an intensive practical bias to help integrate young people immediately into their rural environment. Besides providing basic education to the entire school-age population by

1990, the country will also provide 3-year courses in integrated rural and handicrafts education. Tanzania's policy of education for self-reliance is aimed at enabling the masses to control their environment and assist the process of rural and national development. For the 1980s, Sudan is shifting emphasis from general education to technical and vocational training with a view to contributing to rural development. In Upper Volta, the Ministry of Rural Development supervises special centres which offer vocational training for young farmers, pre-school education for 2-6 year-olds, and basic education for 7-16 year-olds. In the 1980s, the country will invest 33 % of its total public expenditure on rural development.

40. 'Drop-outs' and 'repeaters', in particular at primary level, are a source of great concern to all the countries under review. Most of them have devised programmes to provide a 'second chance' to school drop-outs, mainly by offering them possibilities for vocational training, with a view to reducing this wastage of human resources and to integrating these young people into national life. For related reasons, the content and the orientation of education has been the subject of much attention. All 31 LDCs have instituted reforms in order that education may respond to local needs and improve the lot of the under-privileged rural populations.

41. With respect to second and third level education, all LDCs foresee continuing increases in enrollments, as illustrated in Table D.2. Secondary education is being diversified in most countries to include vocational and technical training components in fields which have relevance to rural and national development programmes. Higher education is being called upon to play a greater role in rural and national development programmes and to provide much needed senior cadres, although the high cost of university education will continue to be a serious constraint on its expansion. In all the LDCs, with the exception of Botswana and Lesotho, the enrollment of girls has been disproportionately low, and all the countries concerned are engaged in efforts to rectify this imbalance. These efforts should contribute also to raising overall enrollment figures and rates in the years to come.

Table D.2 - Projections of enrollment ratios (%) by level of education and by age for both sexes in all the LDCs together

Year	Adjusted gross enrollment ratios			Enrollment ratios by age groups		
	1st level %	2nd level %	3rd level %	6-11 years %	12-17 years %	18-23 years %
1960	28	4	0.2	21	9	0.6
1965	34	6	0.4	25	12	1.0
1970	38	9	0.9	28	15	1.8
1975	50	13	1.2	37	20	2.5
1980	55	14	1.4	42	22	3.0
1985	62	18	2.0	48	25	4.0
1990	68	22	2.5	53	30	5.0
1995	73	27	3.2	57	34	6.2
2000	77	31	3.8	61	37	7.2

Source : Trends and projections of enrollment by level of education and by age - Unesco, 1981.

42. The prospects for rural development in the LDCs are very much conditioned by the persistence of illiteracy. All the countries have accorded a very high priority to the eradication of illiteracy and have been tackling the situation with varying degrees of success. Their efforts to extend education to reach the maximum number of people, both in school and out of school, may reduce the percentage of the illiterates in the population by the year 2000, although the absolute number of illiterates is likely to continue to grow along with population increase.

43. Strategies for aligning education with rural development objectives vary from country to country according to their particular needs and national priorities. However, in general they appear to take into account the following aspects.

44. An educational reform in the context of rural development must be conceived as an intersectoral exercize. Although improving access to education, especially of women, is a prerequisite for any rural development programme, it alone does not necessarily lead to a better life for the rural masses. Expansion of education needs to be coordinated with other rural development activities. Education for rural development must be multidimensional, to include universal primary education, adult education and literacy, agricultural education, vocational and professional training, health and sanitation education, etc. The nature of educational programmes have to be modified to make them less academic and more practical, linked with the employment opportunities in a given environment.

45. The innovative efforts to provide non-formal education as an alternative path to learning, as undertaken in Bangladesh, Benin, Guinea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Tanzania, Uganda, etc., merit careful study by other countries. In as much as non-formal education is sometimes less costly than conventional schooling and may be more suitable for catering to primary and secondary education drop-outs and adult illiterates, it deserves wider experimentation and application. To reach people living in remote areas (e.g. mountainous areas in Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Burundi, Ethiopia and Rwanda) or mobile rural populations (e.g. nomadic peoples in Sahelian and Arab countries), governments will need to adopt innovative methods, such as mobile schools or visiting teachers. In some countries the use of mass media - radio and TV - may prove to be a suitable means of contact with remote populations.

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Annex 1 —Basic Indicators for the 31 least developed countries

Countries	Surface area in square kilometers	Population in millions mid-1979	GNP per capita Dollars 1979	Percentage of illiteracy by sex (for years indicated)		
				Total	Male	Female
Afghanistan	647497	15.488	170	87.8 (1975)	80.8	96.3
Bangladesh	143998	86.643	90	74.2 (1974)	62.7	86.8
Benin	112622	3.469	250	75.2 (1980)	56.6	92.9
Bhutan	47000	1.269	80	78 (1980)	-	-
Botswana	600372	791	600 (1978)	67.3 (1964)	69.9	65.2
Burundi	27834	4383	180	77.4	61.3	92.8
Cape Verde	4033	319	260 (1978)	63.1 (1970)	-	-
Central African Republic	622984	1.909	290	61.5 (1980)	41.2	79.6
Chad	1284000	4.417	110	94.4 (1963)	87.9	99.4
Comores	2171	328	200 (1978)	41.6 (1966)	33.9	48.3
Democratic Yemen	332968	1.838	480	72.9 (1973)	52.3	92.1
Ethiopia	1221900	30.420	130	94.0 (1965)	86.0	96.0
Gambia	11295	585	230 (1978)	85.2 (1980)	73.2	97.2
Guinea	245857	4.887	280	91.4 (1965)	86.0	96.0
Guinea-Bissau	36125	563	160 (1978)	71.6 (1980)	58.4	84.6
Haiti	27750	4.919	260	76.7 (1971)	71.3	81.6
Lao People's Dem. Republic	236800	3.633	90 (1977)	59.0	45.1	73.0
Lesotho	30355	1.309	340	41.4 (1966)	56.0	22.4
Malawi	118484	5.817	200	77.9 (1966)	66.3	87.7
Maldives	298	145	170 (1978)	18.0 (1977)	18.0	18.0
Mali	1240000	6.485	140	90.6 (1976)	86.5	94.3
Nepal	140797	13.713	130	80.8 (1975)	66.6	95.0
Niger	1267000	5.150	270	94.8 (1980)	89.9	99.5
Rwanda	26338	4.649	200	50.5 (1980)	37.8	62.8
Samoa	2842	154	250 (1978)	-	-	-
Somalia	637657	3.542	130 (1978)	94.8 (1980)	90.0	99.5
Sudan	2505813	17.865	370	85.3 (1966)	74.7	96.3
Uganda	236036	13.225	290	52.1 (1980)	35.5	68.5
United Republic of Tanzania	945087	17.982	260	26.5 (1978)	22.3	30.4
Upper Volta	274200	6728	180	91.2 (1975)	85.3	96.7
Yemen Arab Republic	195000	5.785	420	91.7 (1980)	84.1	99.5

Source : Unesco Statistical Yearbook - 1981, World Development Report, The World Bank, 1981, and country presentation papers, United Nations, 1981.

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